

FAIR PROMISE FARM  
Betterton, Maryland  
(ca 1890)

K-423

The old house on Fair Promise Farm is significant because it represents one type of house constructed in the late 19th century. The building was constructed about 1890 by Mr. & Mrs. Norris Barnard.

The building has two parts: a formal cruciform section for the family at the front and a rectangular wing at the rear for the help's quarters. In plan the main house is a Latin Cross with its arms perpendicular to the road; the rear arm contains the kitchen and the wing continues the line of this projection.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

K-423

MAGI # 1504235604

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

FAIR PROMISE FARM

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

North side Howell Point Road, 1½ miles  
from Betterton

1st

CITY, TOWN

Betterton

☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Kent

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT☒ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☒ PRIVATE☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☒ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☐ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

John E. Stafford

Telephone #: 301-348-5015

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Fair Promise Farm

CITY, TOWN

Betterton

☐ VICINITY OFSTATE, zip code  
Maryland, 21610**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Kent County Court House

Liber #: WHG 41

Folio #: 78

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

K-423

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The early 20th century house on Fair Promise Farm is located on the north side of Howell Point Road. It faces south, toward the roadway; about  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile to the north is the shore of the Sassafras River. West of the house are a group of gable-roofed dairy barns. The house is surrounded by lawns and shaded by tall trees; there are no developed formal gardens.

The building has two parts: a formal cruciform section for the family at the front and a rectangular wing at the rear for the help's quarters. In plan the main house is a Latin Cross with its arms perpendicular to the road; the rear arm contains the kitchen and the wing continues the line of this projection. The only connection between the two is through the kitchen, an illustration of social organization in rural Kent. The construction and decoration of these two sections both underscore the difference.

The formal part of the house is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  stories tall and rests on a brick foundation. It is frame, as is the rear section, and has a slate roof. The rear section is a true story and a half tall with a gable roof. It is three bays long and two bays wide and is set on brick piers.

Each section of the cross is four bays long; the intersection is off center, providing for a two bay long entry porch in the southwest corner of the building. This porch wraps around the west side of the building and has a soffet decorated with round spindels and a pierced-work corner panel. The entrance porch has been extended forward one bay on the front with much simpler detailing used on this addition.

All ends of the cross-shaped plan are terminated with three sided bay windows with gable roofs. These little gables have decorative shingle work and 1 over 1 sash windows. Above the second floor windows is applied sunburst decoration.

Windows have one over one sash, but each upper sash is bordered by colored glass

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES ca 1890

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Mr. &amp; Mrs. Norris Barnard

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This building is significant because it represents one type of house constructed in the late 19th century. It is also reputed to be the first house in Kent County to have electric servants buzzers in each room that were connected to a master panel in the kitchen. The building was constructed about 1890 by Mr. & Mrs. Norris Barnard. They lost the property during the Depression which began in 1893.

Using the frequency of foreclosures on farm properties as a guide, the period from about 1885 to 1910 was a difficult one for farmers in the county. As a consequence relatively few buildings like this one were constructed.

The house has outstanding period detailing, especially in its woodwork. The slate roof is quite unusual in this area and quite handsomely done. Use of the colored and etched glass is representative of the late Victorian fascination with this decorative material.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

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**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Kent County Land Records, Kent County Court House, Chestertown, Maryland

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Marsha L. Fritz, Survey Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Kent County Planning Commission

DATE

778-4600, ext.67

STREET & NUMBER

Court House

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chestertown, Maryland

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

panes set in wooden muntins. The window trim is about  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " wide and has a band of reeding on the head and on the sides down to the lock rail. It is used with square corner blocks.

The main entry has a pair of four panel doors with an etched glass upper pane. The same glass pattern, a floral design, is used for the transom lights. The edges of the rails and stiles are treated with decorative chamfering.

The roof is vari-colored grey slate enriched with a band of round-butt slates with a diamond pattern of lighter grey slates in the center of each slope. The under side of the eaves boarding is exposed as are the curved rafter ends.

A one-story gable-roofed addition has been constructed in the southeast corner. Probably an early addition, it has similar windows and trim both inside and outside as the main house.

Entry is into the stair hall. The stair way is L-shaped and rises to an equally large hall on the second floor. Newels and intermediates are square with chamfered corners and a simple design incised into each face. The balusters are turned and they rest on a closed string.

The rooms on the first floor are connected by wide openings, some with double pocket doors. The trim reeded and used with corner blocks; it is about  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. On both floors the openings to the bay windows are accented with plaster brackets, more elaborate on the first floor than on the second.

The building has been divided into two rental units.

FAIR PROMISE FARM  
Betterton, MarylandLand Records of  
Kent CountyTransactionWHG 41  
78

TO: John E. & Helen R. Stafford, Laurel Spring,  
New Jersey  
FROM: The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the  
U.S.  
DATE: August 31, 1955

374 + acres on both sides of Howell Point  
Road and excluding lots on the water sold off by  
previous owners.

WILL

TO: Adrian R. Allen Jr. & Helen Hyland Allen  
FROM: Adrian Allen  
DATE: October 24, 1950

Five years after inheriting the property,  
Mrs. Allen renounced her interest and soon after  
the farm was sold.

RAS 25  
532

TO: Adrian R. Allen, East Orange, N.J.  
FROM: Harry & Ruth H. Willis  
DATE: December 19, 1940

Same land description as WHG41/78.

JTD 15  
301

TO: Harry & Ruth H. Willis  
FROM: Thomas W. Eliason  
DATE: May 17, 1907

The farm and wharf called Barnards Wharf  
which is shown on the 1877 Atlas to have included  
buildings.

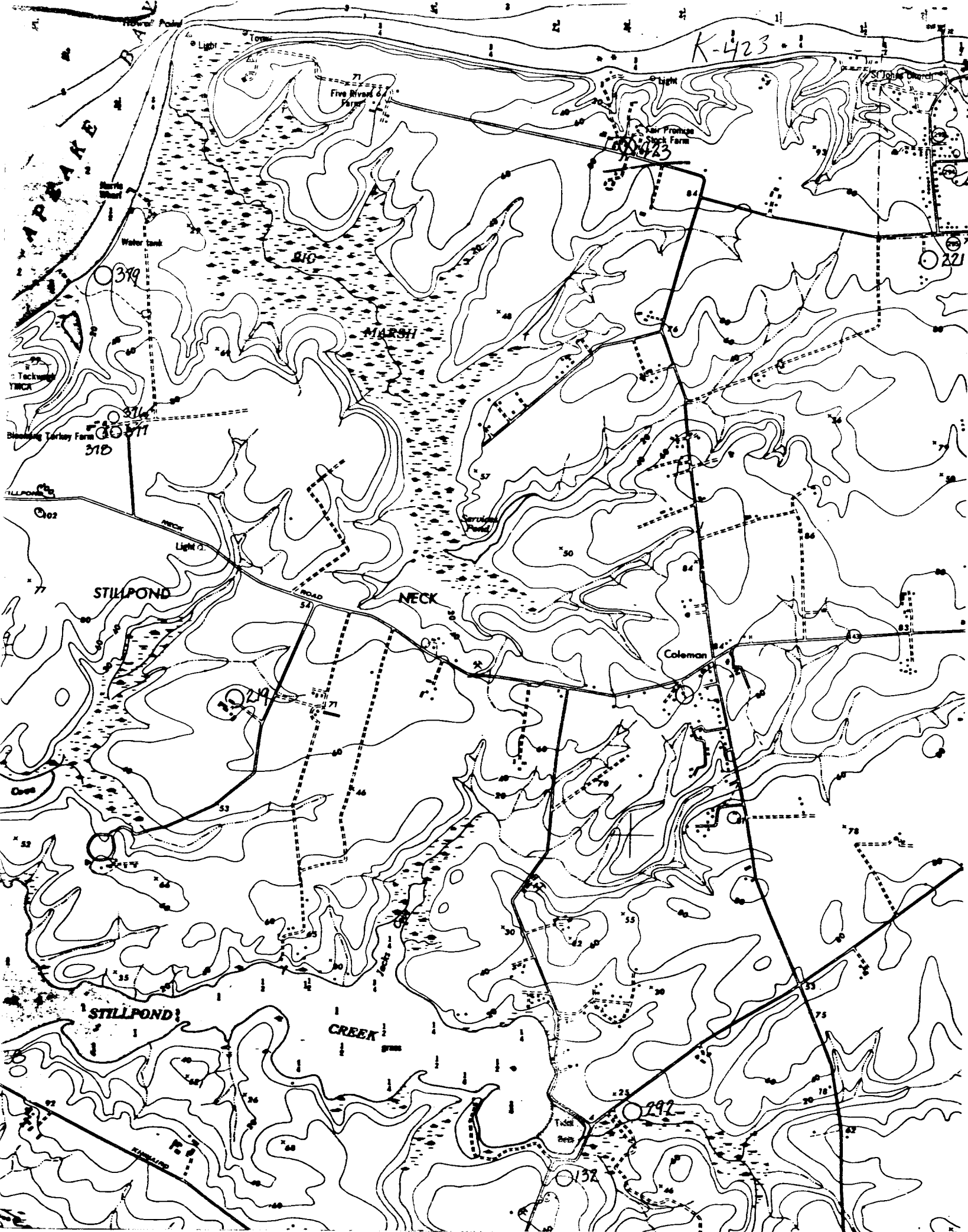
Land Records of  
Kent CountySGF 2  
344Transaction

TO: Thomas W. & Violet B. Eliason  
FROM: Richard D. Hynson, trustee  
DATE: March 21, 1894

The property was called the Norris Barnard Farm. Norris & Martha Barnard were indebted to Thomas Eliason in the form of a \$9,000 mortgage made in 1890 (SB13/408.) The farm and premises were put up for auction in 1894 and Thomas Eliason was highest bidder (\$8,862.50.)

Earlier names were Howell Point Farm, Fair Promise, Partnership, and Dale Town.







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Fair Promise Farm

View to Northwest

Betterton

Kent County

M. L. Fritz

7/1980

PRINTED BY

*J. Tyler Campbell*

CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND

JUN 19 1980